



city of  
**greenville**

# News Release

## **CITY COUNCIL DISCUSSES STATUS OF CITY'S MINORITY-OWNED/WOMAN-OWNED BUSINESS ENTERPRISE PROGRAM**

**(Greenville, SC)** Office of Management and Budget staff presented an update on the City's Minority-Owned/Woman-Owned Business Enterprise (MWBE) Program and provided a report on procurement results for FY2011-2012 at a City Council workshop this week. The report showed that of the City's \$18,488,322.92 in net controllable procurement expenditures in FY2011-2012, MWBE expenditures totaled \$4,497,497.06, or 24.3%. The City's goal for participation of MWBEs is 10%, which is the same as the State of South Carolina's. During FY2011-2012, the City registered 10 new minority vendors and 18 new woman-owned vendors, bringing the total of MWBE vendors registered with the City to 229, which is an increase of 12.6% from FY2010-2011. Of those 229 registered vendors, the City purchased goods/services from a total of 63 vendors in FY2011-2012.

Through the MWBE Program, the City is committed to providing education to minority/woman-owned businesses on City procurement practices, procedures and bid requirements. According to City Council member Lillian Flemming, the City believes that it is in the community's best interest to assist minority/woman-owned businesses to develop fully, and has developed policies and programs that are specifically designed to promote balanced economic and community growth. "The City's MWBE Program was established in 2007 to ensure that minority/woman-owned businesses are afforded the opportunity to fully participate in the City's procurement process," said Flemming. "The City's efforts to implement a continuous process for information flow between MWBEs and City staff, and to provide electronic access to MWBE vendors in order to increase minority participation is commendable and innovative, and provides real incentives for minorities and women to participate in the procurement process."

As a part of its efforts, City staff has established working relationships and information-sharing opportunities with organizations such as the Greenville Chamber of Commerce, the South Carolina Hispanic Chamber of Commerce and The Minority Economic Development Institute. Additionally, there is a page on the City's web site for the MWBE Program that

includes information about the program, an online vendor registration form and links to local, state and regional agencies and organizations dedicated to supporting and promoting minority business development. The City's internal web site also features a categorized MWBE vendor directory for use by employees who have purchasing authority.

According to City Council member Jil Littlejohn, another significant way that the City has worked to facilitate the participation of MWBEs is by breaking large projects into smaller bidding opportunities to make them more economically feasible and allow more MWBEs to compete competitively. This was done for the recent renovation of the Police Department's training facility. For that project, 17.5% of the total budget of \$292,000 was spent with MWBEs. "The City has made a lot of strides over the past few years and has demonstrated its commitment to providing meaningful opportunities for MWBEs to participate in its procurement activities," said Littlejohn. "And while we're not quite where I'd like us to be, I look forward to seeing this program grow into a model that can be replicated throughout the state and country."

At the workshop, City Council and staff discussed ways to improve the MWBE Program, including the possibility of setting goals for departments and recognizing employee efforts to increase MWBE participation, reviewing preferential scoring within the City's current procurement code, reviewing current insurance and bond requirements and collaborating with the Greenville Chamber's new Vice President of Diversity and Inclusion on capacity-building and resource-sharing opportunities.

For more information about the City's MWBE Program, visit <http://www.greenvillesc.gov/OMB/MWBE.aspx>.